

# ADDRESS

18.

DELIVERED AT THE

## COLORED DEPARTMENT

OF THE

## HOUSE OF REFUGE.

BY THE

HON. WILLIAM D. KELLEY.

On December 31st, 1849.

This Department of the Institution having been opened for the  
Reception of Inmates on December 29th, 1849.

PHILADELPHIA:

T. K. AND P. G. COLLINS, PRINTERS.

1850.

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## A D D R E S S .

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THE year, my friends, is hastening to its close. We are on the threshold of a new one. It is the season when the thoughtful review, at least, the year last past, and note what it has yielded of profit and encouragement, and wherein there is need of amendment or increased effort. The time and occasion invite a retrospective glance, and you will pardon me if I extend it beyond the narrow limits of the fleeting year.

Crime is as old as the world ; and society has been engaged, constantly and by various means, in endeavoring to protect itself against the criminal propensities of its members. In early days, it forfeited the life of the criminal. The axe, the sword, the gibbet, and the gallows, were its penal institutions. It sought to deter men from crime by the influence of terror, and to vindicate the majesty of its laws, and avenge the injured citizen, by the death of the offender. To this sanguinary system succeeded the penitentiary and the galley, wherein the convict, herding with the vicious and unfortunate, was to be restrained from doing harm, and secluded from virtuous associations. The effort of society was still to protect itself by punishing the violator of its laws. The peace and safety of its worthy members were supposed to depend on the height of the walls and the strength of the bars and bolts of its prisons. Such was, also, its method of dealing with pauperism, that fruitful mother of crime. The hard conditions to

which penury subjects its victims—whether it results from vicious habits, or descends as an inheritance, or is the consequence of lingering disease contracted in the too sedulous pursuit of some unwholesome but ill-paid branch of industry—its rags, filth, and deformity, were ever as they now are, painful to the eye of wealth, power, and refinement. They would have such loathsome objects removed from view; and remote from the centres of fashion, but near the town, rose the poor-house, in which orphaned infancy might learn its first lisping phrases from the profane lips of the gray and decrepit wreck left by a life of vagrancy and infamy. Society sought only to protect itself—and, exhausting its energies in vain endeavors to restrain the dangerous, and seclude the disagreeable, it wondered that crime and misery should continue to increase.

Reform was needed; and the fathers of our commonwealth began the good work. There is much in the history of our State to minister to our pride; but, should she exist for countless ages, among the brightest pages of her history will still be those which record her modifications of the penal code.\* In this field, Pennsylvania was emphatically the pioneer. Her statesmen were the first to recognize in the convict a brother and co-heir of heaven, and to embody in the penal system of a great commonwealth the sublime morality of the Gospel. While they protected society by the safe seclusion of the offender, they endeavored to make his seclusion compatible with self-respect and hope for the future. Separating the convict from his

\* Constitution of 1776: Section 38th of the Plan or Frame of Government. Preamble to Act of April 22d, 1794. *3d Smith's Laws*, 186. See also note B, in the Appendix to Vol. X. of the *Laws of Pennsylvania*, p. 471.

companions in crime, they provided him with instruction in some available trade or calling, that, when he again entered the busy world, he should possess, indefeasibly, the means of gaining an honest livelihood. Beholding in him a man, they desired to make him a law unto himself, to quicken and develop his intellect, arouse his moral sentiments, and impress and ennoble him by the power and beauty of holiness. Supplanting the whipping-post by the moral instructor, they made room for an extensive library by removing the rows of muskets, which, holding the felon in check, had silently taught him that force was society's only law ; and, having restrained him from association with the vicious and degraded, they invited the wise and good to visit his lonely cell and strengthen him in the maintenance of good resolves by their counsel and encouragement. Knowing the value of habits of industry, and the coldness and suspicion the discharged convict must encounter, they gave him an interest in the results of his labor as a substantial and appreciable evidence of their desire to restore him to the unrestrained enjoyment of the legitimate pleasures of life. Henceforth, leaving vengeance to Him to whom it belongs, society was to protect itself not by punishing, but by reforming, the criminal. Bars and bolts were still to restrain him ; but, meanwhile, loving sympathy was to strive to soften his indurated heart, wisdom to enlighten his darkened mind, and religion to awaken his dormant soul. Sagacious lawmakers ! They were pioneers in whose path the statesmen of Christendom are following. They lived not to behold the beautiful fruits of their labor ; but the world owes them gratitude, and their memory is the brightest jewel of our commonwealth.

I cannot say that none who have been committed to our penitentiaries and discharged thence at the expiration of their sentences, have returned to the haunts of infamy and crime from which they were originally taken; such is not the fact. But of those committed to them for their first known offence, the proportion that returns under second conviction is small, indeed, in comparison with the results of preceding systems of imprisonment. The Christian doctrine of reformation and forgiveness, asserted in Pennsylvania's penal system, and vindicated by its effects, it was for society to apply more widely in such institutions, and with such details as experience might suggest and the condition of the community require. The lesson was not wasted on the people of Philadelphia. Who can tell the amount of crime prevented, misery relieved, or anguish assuaged by the Magdalen Society, and its younger sister, the Rosine Association? or by the humane management of the Moyamensing House for the Employment and Instruction of the Poor? To the last-named institution the homeless vagrant, discharged from jail friendless and penniless, may turn his steps with the assurance that some of the comforts of home—employment, wages, and cheering but judicious words of sympathy—await him, if he is ready to struggle once more for victory in the battle of life.

To this, or rather to these classes, for they are preventive as well as reformatory, belongs the House of Refuge. Its external appearance is that of a prison. Like the prison, it secludes its inmates from society, and subjects them to the care of officers and the discipline appointed by law. It is, however, a school. It is so considered by our legislature, and has been so called by the

Supreme Court of the State. "The object of the charity is reformation, by training its inmates to industry ; by imbuing their minds with principles of morality and religion ; by furnishing them with means to earn a living ; and, above all, by separating them from the corrupting influence of improper associates."\* The building in which we are assembled is a Refuge for Juvenile Colored Delinquents. A refuge, a home, a school, and a church for the offending offspring of the poorest, most ignorant, most degraded, and suffering members of our community. Its arrangements are liberal, and admirably adapted to its high purposes. I am sure your hearts warmed with gratitude to its founders and friends as you passed through its graceful corridors and spacious apartments. Would that he who pronounces Christianity a failure were with us, and would go hence to the courts and alleys, of foul and unfurnished hovels, from which its future inmates will be brought ! We are indebted for the establishment of the refuge to the Christian energies of the Philadelphia Society for alleviating the miseries of Public Prisons. I say Christian energies ! for the society is composed of men less devoted than John Howard, and assisted by women less devoted than Elizabeth Fry, but who are all animated by the loving spirit that made their names immortal. At the suggestion of this society, a general meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia was held on the 4th of February, 1826, for the purpose of establishing a House of Refuge for Juvenile Delinquents, at which Chief Justice Tilghman presided, thus lending the cause the weighty influence of a wise and good man's name. The meeting resolved to establish such an institution ; and adopted measures to obtain

\* Ex parte Crouse, 4th Wharton's Reports, page 11.



the requisite funds, and an act of the legislature incorporating the contributors. On the 21st of the succeeding June, the corner stone of the White Department was laid. On the 29th of November, 1828, that department was formally opened; and, on the 8th of the following December, the first youth was committed to the care and custody of the Managers of the Refuge. Since then, twenty-one years have elapsed, and more than twenty-five hundred boys and girls have been admitted to the institution. For what offences, and on whose complaint, were they sent there? And what is known of their subsequent course of life? The refractory and incorrigible child, complained of by the parent, from whose watchful care it had attempted to escape, and the felon, convicted of his crime by a jury of his countrymen, have been there. In this abode of childhood have been found every dark shade of character that revels in the haunts of folly and vice, or broods sullenly in the hardened convict's cell. Their careers have been as various as their characters. It cannot be said that the discipline of the institution has reformed them all; that none of them have gone quickly from the refuge to the jail or penitentiary; but to say simply that such cases have been exceptions, would fall far short of the truth. Subdued, enlightened, and encouraged by its excellent system of discipline and instruction, some of its inmates have gone forth to act no humble part in the pursuit of high and just aims. Evidences of public confidence and esteem have not been withheld from them. Energy, capacity, and integrity have, in more than one instance, secured posts of public trust and honor to former inmates of the Refuge for Delinquents; and hundreds of them are now filling, with propriety, the respon-



sible positions of husband, wife, and parent, master, friend, and citizen.

The subject of a Refuge for Colored Juveniles frequently engaged the attention of the Board of Managers. Having, however, no funds applicable to the purpose, they adopted no efficient measures for the erection of the necessary buildings. In January, 1846, a communication from the society whose earlier labors had established the White Department was received by the Board, requesting them to appoint a committee to confer with a committee from the society as to the best means of establishing a colored department. The request was complied with. The committees met. And, on the 3d of the following April, the Board pledged the institution to appropriate 25,000 dollars—to be raised by mortgaging the premises occupied by the White Department—towards the purchase of a site and the erection of suitable buildings for the purpose, provided a like sum should be contributed to the object by private subscription within one year from that date. On the 19th of the same month, a public meeting of citizens friendly to the object convened, and appointed a committee of thirty to collect the sum required from the public. For the credit of our city, I wish I could add that the appeal of the committee had elicited a prompt and generous response; that more than the required sum had been contributed; that, in a few weeks, the committee, having accomplished the purpose for which it was appointed, had been discharged from further service. Most of the gentlemen appointed on the committee entered upon their labors with commendable zeal. They did their duty faithfully; but, when the year expired, they were under the necessity of announcing that the required sum had not

been obtained. The Board of Managers generously extended the time for making the collection. They were deeply impressed with the importance of the object; and, a suitable site offering, they resolved to purchase it, and proceed, as far as their funds would justify, in the erection of the buildings. I have said the committee of thirty did its duty. Its appeals were frequent, well timed, and urgent. Its members sought the capitalist in his home, and the successful man of business in his counting-room; the press lent them its powerful aid; yet, though the wealth of our citizens was increasing with unexampled rapidity, though our city is widely and justly celebrated for the number, extent, and munificence of its benevolent institutions, they failed. The result of all their labor was a subscription of 15,000 dollars—one-tenth of which was the contribution of one whose generous impulses know no other restraint than a dread of popular applause. While I leave you to discover the cause of the committee's failure, permit me to beg you to relieve our community from the reproach of extending its aid with liberal hand to all but those who need it most.

The corner stone of this edifice was laid on the 1st of July, 1848. Eighteen months have elapsed; and, had the Managers waited till the proposed sum had been subscribed, I fear the stone would not yet have been hewn: but, through their well-directed energy and enterprise, the buildings are ready to receive one hundred inmates. Happy as the effects of the separate system of confinement have been upon adults, it would not answer the purposes of such an institution as the Refuge. Childhood and youth require not only guidance, but fellowship. Exercise in the light and air is as essential to physical

development as food and sleep. Action is the element of childhood; and the man who will follow a half-grown lad through all the wanderings and pranks of a holiday will need no artificial sedative to induce repose when night shall come. Children are also apt instructors of their companions. The leading boy of a class is, more than the plodding usher, the teacher of his fellows. Youth, especially those who have passed through childhood without mental discipline, require the stimulant of emulation. And teachers generally agree that instruction is more readily received and apprehended by the members of a class than by the separate scholar. In view of these truths, and the corrupting influence of vicious associations, the Managers selected their system from schools rather than prisons. They did not seek the means of executing the separate or congregate system of imprisonment, but of maintaining distinct series of male and female classes of pupils. The skillful architect\* has enabled them to accomplish their purpose admirably. The inmates of each sex are to be divided into three classes. The first and second classes will have their playgrounds and workshops. The third classes, to be composed of the elder and least hopeful inmates, will for a time be kept separate. Ample provision is, however, to be made for their instruction and their enjoyment of exercise in the open air. Provision is also made for preventing contact and conversation between the classes in the school rooms, chapel, dining rooms, and dormitories. School rooms, chapel, dining rooms, and dormitories! To how large a portion of the future inmates of this spacious building are these words unmeaning sounds! Of dining rooms they have some knowledge,

\* John M'Arthur, Jr.

from loitering stealthily near the door or window, in the hope of purloining the small but valuable articles of table furniture, or of appeasing their hunger with savory fragments of "broken victuals." Many of them will, for the first time, stretch their limbs on a well made bed within these walls, and here find themselves, for the first time, at a table well ordered, supplied with wholesome food, and presided over by the head of a family. To the objects of the school room and chapel, they are, with few exceptions, strangers. Living in the courts and alleys of a Christian city, they know the name of their Creator but as a word of boisterous emphasis.

Into the buildings, as they stand, seventy boys and thirty girls may be received. When all those, embraced in the design of the architect, shall be finished, they will accommodate 220, who will be classified as follows:—

	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1st classes,	40	27	67
2d    "	56	45	101
3d    "	30	22	52
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	126	94	220

The ranges of dormitories are incomplete, and the building for the third classes has not been commenced. This is a subject of profound regret to the Board of Managers; but they can proceed no farther. Having exhausted their disposable funds, and encumbered the estate of the institution with a heavy debt, they are constrained to wait the action of their fellow-citizens. It is for you, my friends, to say when they shall complete the structure. They will do it promptly if you but do your duty in responding to, and publishing their call for, aid. If the requisite fund

is not provided soon under the promptings of benevolence, it will be ultimately under the fear of that retribution which is consequent alike upon duty neglected and crime committed. If, refusing to hear the voice of pity, we are deaf to their appeal, the future criminal statistics of the commonwealth will play the orator, and extract from grudging fear what love and duty should have promptly given.

This is no rhetorical flourish. If what has already been said does not justify it, permit me to offer some additional evidence of its correctness. From whom, and what, is Philadelphia now suffering most? Not from the increasing frequency of the perpetration of crimes of the higher grades—these increase, not in the ratio of the growth of our population;—nor from organized gangs of skilled and hardened felons, for, inefficient as our multiplex police departments are, our borders are now, as they have ever been, comparatively free from these pests of cities. Riot and tumult are the evils under which we groan. The wayward and restless youths who congregate at the street corners, hang about hose and engine houses, and throng the places of cheap and vulgar amusement in which the city abounds, are our terror at home and disgrace abroad. For these, if unchecked, we are all ready to predict a career of crime and punishment. The project of establishing an armed police to hold them in subjection, finds favor with many, and may yet be necessary. In Europe, such lads would constitute the strength of the government. Full of health and animal spirits, and pursuing novelty and adventure with the ardor of youth, they would be fascinated by the roving life of the soldier, and follow the recruiting sergeant. The standing armies of England,



and the States of Europe, absorb enough of this class to overawe the remainder. Availing themselves of the impulses of youth, despotic governments discipline those who, with us, would be the "dangerous class," and rely upon them for the support of law and order; and, if we fail to promote the peaceable and profitable action of these impulses, an armed police, the nucleus of a standing army, will be the consequence of our neglect. Pardon me for drawing an illustration from your own homes. Nothing essential to comfort is wanting there. Your extensive libraries add to the charms of family intercourse. The chiseled marble and glowing canvas grace your walls. And, at your bidding, music sends over your social group her enlivening and purifying influence. Yet, despite these abundant means of domestic enjoyment, your growing children weary of home. You gladly gather their young friends around them in the evening party; you welcome gratefully the card which invites them to an evening of merriment under the roof of a judicious friend; and you open to them the concert and lecture room, and every other means of virtuous enjoyment offered by society. The love of novelty is natural to your children. By providing amusements, which are harmless, if not profitable for them, you hope to retain their confidence and love, and save them from the allurements of folly and vice. Your conduct is prompted by your parental instincts, and sanctioned by your experience. And it would be well for society to follow your example. The children of the poor and ignorant differ not essentially from yours. Their appetite for pleasure is as keen, they are not more sedate, nor has nature given them greater power of enduring trial or resisting temptation.



Crime is not the inevitable consequence of ignorance, but they have close and important relations. And I believe the day is not far distant, when the commonwealth will be constrained, not only to offer a generous elementary education to all her children, but to treat the failure of a parent to secure its advantages to a child as a forfeiture of parental rights. I had occasion recently to request some information on this subject from the heads of our penal establishments, the Clerk of the Quarter Sessions of the County, and the gentlemen who have held the office of Prosecuting Attorney for Philadelphia during the last five years. The replies were all concurrent; and the information they furnished cannot fail to interest in this connection, though it was obtained for another and different purpose. The statistics of the Penitentiary, and the convict department of the County Prison, show that less than two per cent. of the whole number of convicts are thoroughly educated. Of one hundred and forty-nine prisoners received into the Eastern Penitentiary from this city and county, between January 1st, 1846, and December 17th, 1849, twenty-eight had received a tolerable elementary education; twenty-three could neither read nor write; twenty-five could "read a little;" and seventy-three could read and write imperfectly.\* During the years 1847 and 1848, three hundred and thirty-five prisoners were received into the convict department of the County Prison, of whom one hundred and twenty-six could neither read nor write; ninety could "read a little;" one hundred and six-

\* Those marked in the above list as able to read and write are so registered upon their answers to questions at the time of their reception. It seldom amounts to more than being able to read indifferently, and write very poorly; *not one in twenty* being able to write a fair and connected letter.—*Note from Thomas Scattergood, Warden E. P.*

teen could read and write imperfectly;\* and three were well educated. Of twenty-one persons under conviction of riot in the County Prison, on the 19th of December, 1849, eight could not read; three could read, but not write; seven could read and write, but knew nothing of arithmetic; and three could read, write, and cipher. No one of them had a good elementary education. Of two hundred and thirty-seven boys over thirteen years of age, received into the White Department of the Refuge, between January 1st, 1847, and December 17th, 1849, forty-two could read well; one hundred and fifty-three could "read a little;" and forty-two could not read at all. The Clerk of the Sessions says that a large majority of the persons held to bail in the court for riot, and other offences involving a breach of the peace, are "destitute of education, being unable to write their names to the bail bond." Messrs. Wharton, Webster, and Reed, who have in turn prosecuted the pleas of the commonwealth in this county for the last five years, agree that, with few exceptions, this class of offenders are "almost utterly uneducated." Nor do these facts stand alone. No graduate of the Philadelphia High School is known to have been charged with the commission of a crime; and, though I have made efforts to discover the fact, if it were so, I have not learned that a single person who has completed the excellent course of instruction given in our Grammar Schools, has ever been tried or arraigned in a criminal court.†

\* Of these not more than one-fourth can be said to do more than write their names.—*First Annual Report of the Board of Inspectors.*

† For nearly two years I was prosecuting attorney in this county, and from the period when I went into office down to the present moment, comprising an interval of five years, I have paid much attention to the working of the criminal system. From being, during the whole of this period, a Director of the Public Schools, my consideration has naturally been employed

Let me not be misunderstood. I am not maintaining that man is wholly the creature of circumstances; or that instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, in grammar, geography, and mathematics, will purify his nature or defend him against all the assaults of folly and sin. What I mean to say is, that comprehension of, and facility in, these branches of learning, elementary as they are, open to him vast fields of profit, pleasure, and advancement, from which his ignorant brethren are excluded: and that the fact that a boy has passed years in the Grammar School, proves that his childhood was not homeless; that he had friends to watch over him, to encourage and counsel him, to guard him from vicious associations, to stimulate his emulation, and gratify his appetite for refined and profitable pleasures. Did our parental and fraternal sympathies extend beyond our own homes, we would oftener pity than condemn the turbulent youth of our suburbs. Go with me to one of their homes; not to that of the boy who never knew his parents, and has grown from infancy on the rough charities of the poor; nor the son of the destitute widow, who, toiling wearily for food, clothes, and rent, reluctantly leaves her boy throughout the day to his own guidance, and the companionship afforded by the alley in which they live; nor the son of the inebriate, who

on the question how far public crime is affected by public education; and at one time I compiled a tabular statement of my observations on this particular point. I need now only give you the result, which is that, whether in prison, waiting trial, or in prison after trial, charged with riot or turbulence, I have never known a single pupil of the High School. I can go further, and say that, in all the cases in which recognizances of bail were taken, and in which the defendant was produced for the purpose of writing his name, and in all cases which by any test the educational position of the defendant could be evolved, I never knew, with but one exception, of a pupil of the public schools, of a higher grade than the third division, concerned.—*Note from Francis Wharton, Esq.*

labors by day only to purchase madness for the night. Such, though far from being exaggerated cases, do not illustrate the point under consideration so well as the apprentices of our well-conditioned mechanics. Many of these are worthy farmers' sons. The father's well-tilled farm will support the family; but is too small to be again divided. The son must, therefore, carve out his own fortune. He is now a well-grown boy, and, having enjoyed the example of his father's temperance and industry, the care and counsel of his fond mother, and such slender means of education as the wayside school affords, he turns his steps towards the city, as the field of widest and most varied enterprise. His object is the acquisition of a trade, by which he may gain an honest and independent livelihood. When his heart swells with recollections of home, he turns to the future and thinks of the happy time to come, when, as a successful master-workman, his roof shall shelter, and his means maintain his aged parents. Finding employment, he enters on his apprenticeship. In his master he also finds a friend. Their contract, however, is a mere bargain, from which both parties expect advantage. The boy binds himself to give years of willing and obedient labor as the consideration for food, clothing, and instruction in the art and mystery of the calling of his choice. The master—a kind-hearted man and good mechanic—is cheered in his toil by the hope of making something more than a bare living for the little family with which God has blessed him. His home is in a respectable neighborhood. Embellished by few luxuries, it is well supplied with the means of substantial comfort. The snug parlor, darkened at other times, is open to the family on Sunday, or when a few friends visit the mas-

ter's thrifty helpmate. In the rear of the parlor is the little dining-room, warmed by the kitchen stove, around which the family gathers in the evening for the gossip of the day and neighborhood. In the attic is the boy's clean and well-made bed. The little room, though well finished, is without grate or fireplace. To warm it through the long evenings of the winter, when books or intercourse with young companions might engage him, would involve the master in the purchase of a stove, fuel, and lights; a serious item of expenditure, which the custom of the trade would not sanction, and the exigencies of the case do not require; indeed, the boy does not expect it. He knows that he enjoys more comforts than most of his class, and is grateful for them. He cannot, however, let his love of quiet and study be keen as it may, confine himself in his cold chamber through the long winter evenings. True, he is not denied—nay, he is sometimes welcomed—to a place in the “sitting-room.” He need not, however, attempt to read there; nor can he join as equal participant in the conversation. Feeling restraint from the presence of the heads of the family, he soon discovers that he too is a restraint on them. His acquaintances in the city are few, and remembering the oft repeated admonitions of his mother against evil company, he is indisposed to increase their number; but he goes forth to escape the irksomeness of home. And where does he go? To visit friends in the bosom of a virtuous and intelligent family? Alas, he is a stranger! He goes, however, where society in its wisdom and goodness invites him\*—to the street corner, the hose

\* Since this Address was delivered, night schools for male youths and adults have been opened. They offer shelter and instruction to about 2000 pupils, and are well filled nightly; yet more than that number of eager applicants for admission have been rejected. An average nightly attendance



or engine house, the beer shop, or the bar-room—and if he go not speedily thence to worse places—But I need not follow him. Were he a son of yours, your fears would indicate the thousand dangers that surround him.

Thus far, I have spoken chiefly of our white population; but what I have said is equally true of those for whom this building is designed. The colored man is depressed by the causes that depress the white man; and the agencies which strengthen and develop the Anglo-Saxon child would, if fairly applied, give him a sturdy competitor in his darker neighbor. The existence of a colored community in our midst is coeval with slavery. Its members encounter not only the prejudice of color; but, go where they may, let their worth and ability be what they may, they are recognized as the descendants of slaves, and too often treated as though they deserved no better than their fathers' fate. They are with us, yet not of us. Dwelling in our midst, they are a distinct community. Denied the right of citizenship, they are still subject to our laws; and we can no more neglect their moral, intellectual, and social condition with impunity, than we can expect contagious disease to desolate their poor homes and leave our loved ones untouched. I know not how to speak of them as a community. Numbering less than one-twelfth of our population, living chiefly in dependent employments, with comparatively few sources of revenue, and fewer wholesome incentives to ambition, they nevertheless present to the eye of the careful observer as wide a range of character, and perhaps of condition, as is exhibited by so-

of more than 7000 male, and 3000 female pupils, over sixteen years of age, might be had in this city and county. Local libraries, in connection with reading and lecture rooms, would doubtless prove very efficient preventive police agents.



ciety at large. Slavery being the negation of man's right to himself, it, of course, denies him the right to possess or accumulate property. It necessarily keeps him in ignorance. Whether manumitted on our own soil by the wise legislation of our fathers, or elsewhere through the promptings of benevolence, they all came to freedom in poverty and ignorance. The condition of the fugitive slave, and we have many of them, is still worse. In dread of the law by which he would be surrendered if taken, he strives to live in concealment until the chase is over. Idle, and without resources, he soon exhausts his slender stock of clothing, and contracts the vices of his least thrifty and most degraded brethren. Yet, despite all adverse circumstances, they are an improving people. They have their own churches and private schools. They maintain and conduct associations for benevolent and literary purposes. Rising above the menial stations their fathers filled, they are engaged in mechanical pursuits, in trade, and in at least two of the learned professions;\* many of them have acquired real estate, and a few live on income from their capital, which they manage with tact and judgment. I will not ask whether, as a people, they are capable of cultivation. They had answered that question affirmatively and satisfactorily to our community, before it appropriated one of its commodious public grammar school buildings for the education of colored children.†

The prejudice against color is unknown in France; and prominent among her distinguished men of science, her

\* Divinity and Medicine. Dr. D. J. Peck, a graduate of Rush Medical College at Chicago, refers to six of our eminent physicians as to his professional education and skill.

† Sixth street below Pine street.

statesmen, and historians,\* are to be found those whose cheeks are shaded, and whose hair is curled by the blood of Africa.

I am aware that, being but as one to twelve in the community, our colored population send a much greater proportion of the inmates to our almshouse, to the vagrant and convict departments of the county prison, and to the penitentiary; and that they herd together in unfurnished hovels, and thrust themselves into our presence, in rags and filth, on the highways even on the Sabbath day. A pamphlet, now before me, entitled *A Statistical Inquiry into the Condition of the People of Color of the City and Districts of Philadelphia*, which seems to have been prepared with much care and accuracy, informs me that 302 families of them are crowded into the alleys, courts, and intermediate streets of the little space between Fifth and Eighth streets, and South and Fitzwater streets. The names of many of the courts and alleys are unknown to you. I will, therefore, quote them, with the number of colored families living on each :—

Shippen Street,	-	-	55 families.
Bedford Street,	-	-	63 “
Small Street,	-	-	63 “
Baker Street,	-	-	21 “
Seventh and South Streets,			14 “
Spafford Street,	-	-	16 “

\* Alexander Dumas, Gerard, and others. “You have not forgotten that two youths of African blood gained the highest honors in the College at Paris, in the year 1838, and dined on the same day with the King of France, the descendant of St. Louis, at the Palace of the Tuileries. And, let me add, if I may refer to my own experience, that in Paris I have sat, for weeks, at the School of Law, on the same benches with colored persons, listening, like myself, to the learned lectures of Degrande and Rossi.”—*Speech of Charles Sumner, Esq., in Roberts vs. The City of Boston.*

Freytag's Alley,	-	-	9 families.
Prosperous Alley,	-	-	11 "
Black Horse Alley,	-	-	5 "
Hutton's Court,	-	-	9 "
Yeager's Court,	-	-	9 "
Dickerson's Court,	-	-	5 "
Britton's Court,	-	-	5 "
Cryder's Court,	-	-	4 "
Sherman's Court,	-	-	13 "

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302 families.

The estimated average value of the furniture of 176 of these families is \$3 43 per family. Can you believe that there are hundreds of families among us whose whole household furniture is worth little more than the half of five dollars? What influences surround the children of such homes! Are the poverty and degradation of the occupants of these courts and alleys evidence of an inferior nature? Born as many of them were in slavery, and manumitted in poverty, ignorance, and age, they cheerfully accept the hard conditions by which they are surrounded, and are struggling manfully in an upward course. Despair overwhelms many of them, and intemperance degrades them as it degrades the white man; but their condition is no argument against the race. Think you that the half-grown sweep would not gladly exchange his ragged and sooty blanket for the coat, vest, and ring of the flashy clerk or apprentice? or, that the brawny man who, failing to obtain employment, begs the fragments from your table for his wife and children, would not joyfully toil to maintain a decent home? Their squalor and vices weigh no more as an argument against the character of the race than does the condition of their white companions, in

proof of our love of poverty, rags, and degradation. They never sink into debasement too profound for white companionship. But I detain you too long.

From such abodes of want, ignorance, and vice, Gentlemen of the Board of Managers, are to come the larger part of the future inmates of this department of your institution. It will be your privilege to transplant them into intelligent, virtuous, and pious homes. You must receive them in nakedness, for their ragged garments would pollute your premises. They are blind, and you are to be to them eyes; they are lame, and you are to be to them feet. In right of birth they are men, entitled to reason's large discourse; but their nobler faculties lie all undeveloped. They have been loved as the bear loves her cub; but the kindling influence of generous human sympathy has been withheld from them. They know not the power of emulation, and are strangers to ambition; their only hope having been to live as well fed animals. Your looks of kindness and your words of sympathy are to awaken them to a new life, and your generous counsel to strengthen them in its paths. Opening to their wondering gaze the wide fields of human learning, you are to prepare them for strife with the world, and triumph over its temptations. They will be brought to you as pests of society, and you will qualify them for usefulness and duty. They will come to you heathens, and you will not part with them till you have taught them to bow the knee in grateful acknowledgments to God for blessings liberally bestowed.